

Message Text

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SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER ARIAS REAFFIRMS

1. ON SEPT 11, SPANISH PRESS PUBLISHED IN FULL AN INTERVIEW GIVEN BY PRIME MINISTER ARIAS TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE SPANISH NEWS AGENCY EFE. DURING THIS INTERVIEW, PRESIDENT ARIAS MADE SEVERAL SIGNIFICANT STATEMENTS CONCERNING THE GOVT'S INTENTIONS WITH RESPECT TO ITS MODERATE LIBERALIZATION PROGRAM WHICH ARIAS LAUNCHED IN HIS CORTES SPEECH ON FEB 12.

2. WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE POLITICAL INTENTIONS OF THE GOVT AT THIS JUNCTURE, ARIAS REPLIED BY MAKING REFERENCE TO HIS FEB 12 SPEECH AND STATED THAT HIS GOVT'S PURPOSE IS TO "CONTINUE THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF THE REGIME" WITH A VIEW TO "EXPANDING THE SOCIAL BASIS OF PARTICIPATION IN THE FACE OF THE REINSTITUTION OF THE MONARCHY."

3. ARIAS ALSO REFERRED TO THE DRAFT LAWS ON LOCAL ADMINISTRATION AND ON INCOMPABILITY, POINTING OUT THAT THE GOVT PREPARED THESE WITHIN THE TIME LIMITS IT HAD SET ITSELF IN HIS FEB 12 PROGRAM, AND THAT ACTION ON THEM IS NOW UP TO THE CORTES.

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4. WITH RESPECT TO THE PROMISED STATUTE TO PERMIT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS, FOR WHICH HIS FEB 12 SPEECH HAD FAILED TO SET ANY TIME LIMIT, ARIAS STATED THAT HE HOPED THE GOVT DRAFT STATUTE ON POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONISM WOULD BE READY BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR.

5. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT THE SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS, ARIAS SAID THAT THE ONLY GROUPS THAT WOULD AUTOMATICALLY BE EXCLUDED FROM FORMING ASSOCIATIONS WOULD BE THOSE WHO EXCLUDE THEMSELVES THROUGH EXTREMISM OF ONE KIND OR ANOTHER, THAT THE PROPOSED STATUTE SHOULD PERMIT THE EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT OF ASSOCIATION TO ALL THOSE WHO MOVE WITHIN THE ORBIT OF RESPECT FOR THE PRINCIPLES AND NORMS OF SPAIN'S FUNDAMENTAL LAWS, AND THAT THE FUTURE ASSOCIATIONS WOULD THEREFORE HAVE TO RESPECT THE EXISTING LEGALISM AND WOULD MOVE BY DEFINITION WITHIN THE COMMUNION WHICH IS THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT.

6. ARIAS WAS THEN ASKED WHETHER THE ASSOCIATIONS WOULD BE ALLOWED TO BE ESTABLISHED WITHIN THE BROAD DEFINITION OF THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT AS THE "COMMUNION OF ALL SPANIARDS", OR ONLY UNDER A MUCH MORE LIMITED INTERPRETATION OF THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT AS THE ORGANIZATION AND GOVT MINISTRY WHICH IT IS TODAY. ARIAS REPLIED THAT THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT SHOULD NOT BE IDENTIFIED SOLEY WITH ITS EXISTING ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION AND THAT THE POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS SHOULD BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE BROAD DEFINITION OF THE MOVEMENT AS THE "COMMUNION OF ALL SPANIARDS".

7. IN RESPONSE TO ANOTHER QUESTION, ARIAS STATED THAT THE GOVT'S PROGRAM WAS PROCEEDING IN SPITE OF THE INCOMPREHENSION AND RESISTANCE FROM CERTAIN "SECTORS ANCHORED IN NOSTALGIA", BUT THAT THE ATTITUDES OF THESE SECTORS WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO INTERFERE WITH THE GOVT'S ACTIONS.

8. ARIAS ALSO PAID TRIBUTE TO FRANCO, PRINCE JUAN CARLOS, AND TO THE SPANISH INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM WHICH HE SAID HAD FUNCTIONED SO WELL TO THE CREDIT OF THE REGIME DURING THE RECENT CRISIS OF FRANCO'S HEALTH.

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9. COMMENT: BOTH THE TIMING AND THE CONTENT OF THIS INTERVIEW ARE SIGNIFICANT IN THAT: (A) THE INTERVIEW RE-EMPHASIZES, AT THIS CRITICAL JUNCTURE WITH FRANCO HAVING JUST REASSUMED POWER, THE GOVT'S INTENTION TO CONTINUE WITH ITS FEB 12 LIBERALIZATION PROGRAM; (B) THE INTERVIEW CAN BE CONSIDERED AS A WARNING TO CONSERVATIVE REGIME AND ESTABLISHMENT GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS, WHO HAVE BEEN ACTIVE OF LATE IN SEEKING TO APPLY PRESSURES AGAINST

LIBERALIZATION: AND (C) IT HAS ESTABLISHED A TENTATIVE
TIME LIMIT WITHIN WHICH THE GOVT EXPECTS TO HAVE READY
ITS DRAFT STATUTE ON POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONISM, IT HAS
EMPHASIZED THE GOVT'S RESOLVE TO PROCEED WITH
POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONISM, AND HASMADE CLEAR THE GOVT'S
INTENTIONS TO ALLOW ASSOCIATIONS WITHIN A SOMEWHAT BROAD
NATIONAL MOVEMENT FRAMEWORK.

RIVERO

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